Conference Abstract

Specimens, Databases, and Accession Books: Using TaxonWorks to Integrate Multiple Sources of Modern and Historical Data in the INHS Insect Collection

Thomas McElrath[‡], Dmitry A Dmitriev[‡], Matthew Yoder[‡], R. Edward DeWalt[‡], Christopher H. Dietrich[‡]

‡ Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, United States of America

Abstract

Grant-supported digitization projects over the past 20 years at the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) have yielded over 1,000,000 occurrence records (representing over 2.7 million specimens), one of the most successful digitization efforts within the United States. However, receiving multiple grants at the cutting edge has led to numerous projects left at various stages of completeness, several relational databases, orphaned data, and specimens at various stages of curation. TaxonWorks (taxonworks.org), an integrated web-based workbench developed by the Species File Group and supported by the INHS and the National Science Foundation, has provided the digital infrastructure to unify multiple workflows, projects, databases, and even historical accession books into one easy to access, open-source platform. We demonstrate the practical utility of this platform and summarize past, present, and future efforts at the INHS towards integrating all our data within TaxonWorks.

Keywords

digitization, bioinformatics, collection management, museum, workflow

Presenting author

Thomas McElrath